

Available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)**ScienceDirect**

Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 197 (2015) 1074 – 1078

**Procedia**  
Social and Behavioral Sciences

7th World Conference on Educational Sciences, (WCES-2015), 05-07 February 2015, Novotel  
Athens Convention Center, Athens, Greece

## Design of an Instrument to Assess Social Skills in Teacher Training Programs

Carmen Paz Tapia-Gutierrez<sup>a\*</sup>, Sixto Cubo- Delgado<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Universidad Catolica de Temuco, Temuco 4813302, Chile

<sup>b</sup>Universidad de Extremadura, Extremadura 06010, Espana

---

### Abstract

The aim has been to design a tool to assess social skills in initial teacher training students in Chile. Has been design a preliminary instrument to which a content validation was performed by expert judgment and analysis of reliability. The results show an instrument with relevant and consistent dimensions to concept, with reliability  $\alpha = .92$ . The instrument stay composed with 41 items, divided into 5 dimensions. Its use would favor the evaluation and generation of strategies to strengthen social skills in initial teacher training.

© 2015 Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Education and Research Center.

**Keywords:** instrument design, social skills, initial teacher training.

---

### 1. Introduction

Deal appropriately requires various skills among which are the social skills that are an essential component for professional performance. Several investigations recognize that a person with a good level of development of social skills have a better chance of: (i) learning and teaching, (ii) inserted in their social world, (iii) participate in it, (iv) maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships and effective (v) promotes the mental health of teachers and (vi) perform efficiently and effectively in the workplace (Singh, 2004; Rojas, 2006; Imbernon, 2006; Naranjo, 2007; Mourshed, 2008; Fernandez, Teruel, 2009).

The information presented revealed that social skills are relevant to the training of teachers therefore to have tools for evaluation will allow contribute to the learning processes. The assessment of social skills have been an area of great development in recent years, having 37 studies published between 1990-2013 in Latin America (Moran, and

---

\* Carmen Paz Tapia-Gutierrez. Tel.: +876273489247

E-mail address: [ctapia@uct.cl](mailto:ctapia@uct.cl)

Olaz, 2014). At the university level in Chile, have only been validated foreign instruments (Hidalgo and Abarca, 2000; Gismero, 2000) that do not include the idiosyncratic characteristics of the population and the specific skills required for the performance in education. Therefore, generation of instruments constitutes an important contribution in technical and university education, particularly for initial teacher training.

The process of building instruments required a great importance and must be taken with thoroughness (Muniz and Fonseca-Pedredo, 2009; Ruiz, 2007; Carretero-Dios and Perez, 2005) so as to allow objectivity to provide our judgments about the observations and gather sufficient evidence to assure quality instruments. In the judgments related to students on psychological attributes, attitudes and other mental processes that can not be measured directly, it is necessary to have tools to help assess a concept, in this case "social skills". According to Pelechano (2002) there is a tendency for researchers to adapt more to develop tools and warns that this may have consequences either by low functionality or lack of cultural relevance. This last aspect, coupled with the lack of tools to assess social skills in initial teacher training, has been part of the elements that motivated to conduct this research.

This instrumental study (Montero and Leon, 2005) shows the progress made in the construction and implementation of a pilot test to assess social skills in initial teacher training students. To do so it was used delimited collected founded on a previous study in which the concept of social skills for students in initial teacher training was made with the participation of teachers, principals of educational system, as well as academics and students in training. Thus, the dimensions described for the concept of social skills respond to idiosyncratic characteristics of the population that will be evaluated and the specificity of the teaching profession.

## 2. Objectives

- Build an instrument to assess social skills in students participating in an education degree.
- Validate the instrument in its structure and content, with a group of experts related to educational field.
- Analyze social skills reliability of the instrument in university environment.

## 3. Methodology

This instrumental study considered the following phases: (1) Preparation of the instrument, considered as Navas (2002), define objectives of the instrument, determining instrument specifications and preparation of items; (2) Validation expert judgment: get content validity that "provide evidence for the built items are relevant to the concept" (Carretero-Dios and Perez, 2005, 531 p.); (3) Application driver: This phase focused on obtaining the reliability of the instrument to analyze whether the observed scores are highly correlated with true scores (Martinez-Arias, 2005).

The sample was made by a non-probability convenience sampling considering the availability to participate voluntarily in the study. Experts were 10 professionals (30% psychologists and teachers 70%), of whom 60% are women and 40% men. Of these, 60% work as university professors, 20% classroom teachers and 20% of experts related to the area of social skills. Students, 107 in total (91.5% women and 8.4% men) belonging to degree of Basic Education and Preschool Education at four Chilean universities that offer education degrees. Have an age range of 17-28 years, mean 19.8 years.

The instrument design found in its structure a previous study to define the concept of social skills involving principals, teachers, education students and academics who work in initial teacher training (Tapia, 2012). Because of this, the preliminary tool for students of education careers explores six social skills, they are solidarity and empathic skills (EMP); Conversational skills (CON); Self-assertion skills (AUT); Collaboration skills (COL); Conflict resolution skills (RES) and Share Skills (COM) with a total of 99 items considering a Likert scale with five alternatives according to the degree of "agreement".

Data analysis expert evaluation of the structure refers to the relevance and coherence, as item analysis was performed using a matching process that allowed contrast the judgments of experts to valuation given to each item. This process allowed for an instrument pilot of 60 items.

The application data students were analyzed using based on a single application, methods based on the analysis of internal consistency by Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total instrument and each of its dimensions. In turn, an analysis of correlations using Pearson's test was performed.

## 4. Results

#### 4.1 Content validity by expert judgment.

Table 1: Expert judgment based on the relevance and consistency of the dimensions of the concept social skills.

SKILLS	Relevance	Consistency
Solidarity and empathetic	98%	92%
Conversational	94%	80%
Self- assertion	98%	96%
Collaboration	90%	84%
Conflict Resolution	90%	84%
Share	94%	82%

Experts give a high degree according to each of the dimensions of the instrument in the range between 90-98%, indicating that these are relevant to the concept of social skills. Moreover, the definitions of each dimension of the instrument according showed high level in a range between 82 and 96%.

The qualitative analysis of the items, allowed knowing the adequacy of each item of the scale and the assessment of drafting. This procedure allowed to remove and adjust the diction of items from an instrument of 99 items to one made up of 60 items to 6 dimensions.

#### 5. Reliability Analysis

Data from the implementation of the pilot instrument of student in careers related with education, report that the instrument has a  $\alpha = 0.908$  for 60 items ( $n = 107$ ). In the analysis dimension the following results: Solidarity and empathetic Skills  $\alpha = .746$ ; Conversational Skills  $\alpha = .804$ ; Self-assertion Skills  $\alpha = .527$ ; A = .666 Collaboration Skills; Conflict Resolution Skills  $\alpha = .624$ ; Share Skills  $\alpha = .452$

The analysis of Cronbach's alpha and item-whole correlation corrected for both the total scale for each dimension allowed to removed 19 items. Accordingly the final instrument Social skills for university contexts (HHSS\_CU) was composed of 41 items organized into 5 dimensions with a reliability of  $\alpha = .920$ .

Table 2: Statistics for the dimensions of DHHS-CU instrument (41 items)

DIMENSIONS	Media	Variance	Typical Deviation	N of elements	Cronbach Alpha
Solidarity and empathic skills	47,60	22,167	4,708	11	0,787
Conversational skills	44,28	41,223	6,420	11	0,821
Self-assertion skills	25,02	13,320	3,650	6	0,759
Collaborative skills	33,57	15,757	3,969	8	0,653
Conflict resolution	20,63	9,991	3,161	5	0,761

( $n=107$  and 100% answered)

Table 3: Specification Social Skills instrument in university enviroment (DHHS-CU).

Solidarity and empathic skills (EMP) (11 items; Weight Dimension 26,8%)	1	+	I realize when someone is upset with me.
	2	+	I realize the feelings of my classmates.
	4	+	I try to understand my classmates imagining how they see things (trying to feel like them).
	5	+	It afeccts me to see other people failure.
	11	+	I am interested in my classmate's feelings.
	15	+	I am willing to listen when a classmate wants to talk about something personal.
	17	+	When I see a sad classmate, I stay with him/her.
	23	+	I am willing to help my teachers when they ask for it.
	27	+	I cooperate in activities of social action.
	32	+	I am interested in helping my classmates with in trouble
Conversational Skills (CON) (11 items; Weight Dimension 26,8%)	35	+	I am often stay with my classmates when they are sad.
	3	+	I contribute in conversations from what others say.
	8	+	When I talk with a group of classmates I respect the speech turn.
	10	+	In a group of unknown people I can talk naturally.
	18	-	It is hard for me to maintain a conversation with authorities like teachers and principals.
	21	-	In a conversation with others, I avoid to ask questions to unknown people.
	24	+	When I speak with other and this one ask my opinion about something, I answer expressing what I think and feel.
	44	-	If I can, I avoid to speak with adults.
	28	+	It is hard for me to address and begin a conversation with a teacher.
	36	+	I begin a conversation with unknown people without feeling uncomfortable and anxuiuos.
Self-assertion Skills (AUT) (6 items; Weight Dimesion 14,6%)	37	+	When I finnish a conversation with a teacher I appreciate their words.
	39	+	If I have to end a conversation with a classmate I would ask to follow it later.
	12	+	If a friend abuse of goodwill I express my discomfort with the situation.
	19	+	I try to ensure that people does not abuse me.
	22	+	If someone was bothering me during a class I will ask to drop it.
	29	+	If i was criticized by a friend I will quicly explain my piont of view.
Collaboration Skills (COL) (8 items; Weight Dimension 19,5%)	31	-	If I feel that a person has been unfair with me, I would not say anything.
	38	+	When my Friends has been treated wrong I try to defend them.
	7	+	In team work it is easy for me to express ideas to support whatever is that we are studying.
	9	-	It is hard for me to express my opinion about what we have to do to move along in a team work.
	13	+	When I do not understand what we have to do in a team work, I ask someone to explain it to me.
	16	+	When a team worker is not providing to the team work, I let him/her know it immediately.
	20	+	I ask questions to understand what my co-workers are saying.
	25	+	I cheer the members of the group to make an activity.
Confilct resolution Skills (RES) (5 items; Weight Dimension 12,2%)	30	+	I know how to recognize and express the good thing that my partners do in the group.
	41	-	When working in groups, it is hard for me to listen to someone with a different point of view.
	6	+	If I had had problems with a classmate, I seek to reconcile.
	14	+	In a situation of conflict with an adult, I ask questions that could help us to understand the causes.
	26	+	When I have a problem with a classmate, I express my point of view of the motivation that caused it.
	34	+	Before taking a decision I consider different opinions of the conflict.
	40	+	When I want to solve a problem with a classmate, I try to talk to seek solutions.

## 6. Conclusions

Given the social nature of the skills and recognizing that they can not be understood without reference to a social context, the instrument has been designed considering the definition of the concept of social skills from the base of representations that principals, teachers, students in the education field and academics who work in initial teacher training. Thus, the instrument gives a specific area, in this case the performance teaching, and furthermore, meets the idiosyncrasies of the specific population. This is highly relevant because a person can be highly competent in one situation but not in another, because the competition is subject to social values and norms of the culture (Monjas, 1994; Del Prette, del Prette, 1996).

The instrument validated social skills echoing a culture that privileges and recognizes a certain social behaviors that specific group demands and expects the purchase to suit individual (Garcia, Garcia y Rodriguez, 2009). Then, it is particularly important to count on a valid instrument, built in Chile for education students and to promote awareness processes, based on the strengths and weaknesses in the expression of the social skills.

We consider it is necessary to establish the concept validity for this instrument and it will require successive applications with other groups at country level, so as to maximize possible spectrum of information available and thus confirm that the proposed structure from this instrument.

It would be interesting as well that further research on the instrument or other assessment procedures consider the inclusion of share skills since they are part of the representation of social skills. Similarly, one could review to incorporate the cognitive component of social skills because although they are not presented as category are determinants in interactions and hence for teacher performance.

## References

- Barber, M., y Mourshed, M. (2008). *Como hicieron los sistemas educativos con mejor desempeno del mundo para alcanzar sus objetivos*. Mexico: PREAL.
- Carretero-Dios, H., y Perez, C. (2005). Normas para el desarrollo y revision de estudios instrumentales. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 5, 521-551.
- Del Prette, A., Del Prette, Z. A. P. (1996). Habilidades sociais: uma area em desenvolvimento. *Psicologia: Reflexao e Critica. Porto Alegre*, v.9, nº2, p.233-235.
- Fernandez, MR., Palomero, J. y Teruel, MP. (2009). El desarrollo socioafectivo en la formacion inicial de los maestros. *REIFOP*, 12(1), 33-50. Extraido de <http://www.aufop.com>
- Garcia, E., Garcia, C. y Rodriguez, G. (2009). Limitaciones del constructo "habilidades sociales" para la elaboracion de un modelo de intervencion social en el aula. p. 293- 310
- Gismero, E. (2000). *Escala de Habilidades sociales Manual*. Madrid: TEA Ediciones.
- Hidalgo, C., y Abarca, N. (2000). *Comunicacion interpersonal Programa de entrenamiento de habilidades sociales*. Santiago, Chile: Universidad Catolica de Chile.
- Imbernon, F. (2006). Actualidad y nuevos retos de la formacion permanente. *Revista Electronica de Investigacion Educativa*, 8(2). Extraido de <http://redie.uabc.mx/vol8no2/contenido-imbernon.html>
- Martinez-Arias, R. (2005). *Psicometría: Teoría de los Tests Psicologicos y Educativos*. Madrid, Espana: Editorial Sintesis.
- Monjas, M<sup>a</sup>. I. (1994). Evaluacion de la competencia social y las habilidades sociales en la edad escolar. En M. A. Verdugo (dir.), *Evaluacion curricular*. Madrid: Siglo XXI de Espana Editores.
- Montero, I. y Leon, O. (2005) Sistema de clasificacion del metodo en los informes de investigacion en Psicologia. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology* Vol. 5, Nº 1, pp. 115-127.
- Moran, V. E. y Olaz, F. O. (2014). Instrumentos de evaluacion de habilidades sociales en America Latina: un analisis bibliometrico. *Revista de Psicologia*, 23(1), 93-105. doi: 10.5354/0719-0581.2014.32877
- Muniz, J. y Fonseca-Pedrero, E. (2009). *Construccion de instrumentos de medida en psicologia*. Espana: Formacion continua a distancia, Consejo general de Colegios oficiales de psicologos.
- Naranjo, C. (2007). *Cambiar la educacion para cambiar el mundo*. Chile: Indigo Cuatro Vientos.
- Navas, MJ. (2002). *Metodos, disenos y tecnicas de investigacion psicologica*. Madrid: UNED.
- Pelechano, V. (2002). Valoracion de la actividad cientifica en psicologia? pseudoproblema, sociologismo o idealismo? *Analisis y Modificacion de Conducta*, 28, 323-362.
- Rojas, A. (2006). La cara oculta de la luna. Liderazgo y critica al racionalismo en la formulacion e implementacion de politicas educacionales. *Revista Electronica Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educacion*, 4(4), 25-38. Extraido de <http://www.rinace.net/arts/vol4num4e/art3.pdf>.
- Singh, M. (2004). Teorias y paradigmas de la formacion inicial. En I. Flores (Ed.), *¿Como estamos formando a los maestros en America Latina?* (pp. 19-32). Lima, Peru: Ministerio de Educacion, GTZ, UNESCO.